

Parisian Seminar

After the recent success of the 3rd European Hapkido Championship, Master Kim Beom from the Duk Moo Academy held a seminar in Paris to help expand Hapkido and teach other guests including another 4th Dan Master attending from Belgium with his students. The seminar took place on the 21st and 22nd of April 2007, in a large martial arts gym with about twenty to thirty participants taking part. The participants were from England, France, Belgium and Korea.

Master Kim Beom is the head of Duk Moo Academy in Europe and is based in the Northeast of England. He is 7th Dan Master of Hapkido and son of the greatly respected Grandmaster Kim Duk-in. Master Kim has been teaching Hapkido all his life, achieving his first black belt at the young age of 7. Being brought up surrounded by the best Grandmasters Korea has to offer, he advanced very quickly in Korean Martial Arts. Master Kim and his students, Instructor Michael Purvis (Meadowfield), Instructor Kelvin Gardiner (Newcastle University), Instructor Matthew Dundon (Northumbria University) and Andrew Hale arrived in Paris on the Friday night, where we were met by the French club instructor who had arranged transportation for us all, we were taken out for a meal and shown to our accommodation.

We started with breakfast being offered to us at the dojang of the French instructor Nicolas Marrocco, one of Master Kim's students and an old student of Master Han Shin Myong. We were offered baguettes, croissant, eggs and a variety of other French food. The seminar then began at 9:00 on the Saturday starting with certificates of recognition being handed to two French Duk Moo Academy students for achieving 1st Dan degree black belt awarded by Master Kim. We moved on to dan-jun breathing, dan-jun breathing is an important traditional exercise that most martial arts tend to overlook, we use it for various reasons including to help relax, remove stress, and store energy. It also has various healing properties from many different ailments, and when applied properly allows a great deal of flexibility. As part of the warm up under Master Kim's tutelage, basic kicks were shown and we moved on to advanced and combination kicking which can enable someone to fend off attackers from multiple directions, these techniques are considered very high up and not normally taught to outsiders as they are lethally dangerous. Rather than teaching strength we teach to relax when kicking, allowing a great deal more power, applying principle and skill over strength. One of the key aspects we teach when kicking is control, learning when to stop and as well as how much energy is needed. One of Duk Moo Academy's specialities is acrobatic kicking, and before long Master Kim was teaching a variety of different acrobatic kicks which can be practiced even by non-acrobatic people including standing kicks, aerial kicks, and combinative kicks. After the kicks, we moved on to Nak-Bup, which is learning to fall correctly. The natural reaction a body has when falling can hurt oneself whether it be tripping over or being hit by a car, it can lead to broken bones, permanent damage and even death. However, learning to land in the correct manner can save people's lives. They may walk away with a few bruises but the alternative is much worse; one of our students was hit by a car several months ago and in time managed to break fall correctly leading to only small injuries. The art of falling correctly can be compared to that of a cat, being able to jump and land without injury, the key aspect when falling is to fall without fear as confidence is a major aspect needed.

Following the warm-up Master Kim split us into groups and began teaching parts of Duk Moo Academy's syllabus, as well as more elite techniques reserved normally for those who can prove themselves, helping to guide everyone from white belt to black even the Belgian club and Master Patrick. Just some of the techniques taught were self-defence techniques, punch and kick defence, attacking and more advanced techniques to the higher belts including women's self-defence. Gradually, Master Kim went around sharing his expertise and helping those understand the principles of Hapkido. Currently in France many people now seek traditional tutelage and Master Kim is one of few who can offer this, many were greatly impressed with what they were shown. Finally, everyone was asked to line up and Master Kim taught striking techniques, these rely not on strength but skill and grace, using our bodies to help apply the techniques while striking specific parts of the body while still teaching control. Pressure points are important for such attacks, but we also teach these as a means of cure such as acupressure. Everyone cooled down and finished the seminar for the day while being invited to a formal meal at a French meat restaurant. Attended by the French club and several other students as well as Master Kim and his students from England, the meal was greatly delightful and helped share our different cultures.

The seminar continued the next day on Sunday morning, with baguettes and croissant at the dojang for breakfast. Starting at around 9:30 we began with a grading; several people took part and all past achieving their belts and certificates. The students were marked on manners which are very important for the principles of Hapkido as well as being marked on techniques such as self-defence, attacking, learning to receive and break falling as well as basic kicking techniques. The students past with a round of applause and approval from everyone else including Master Kim. We then lined up and began the traditional warm-up exercise involving dan-jun breathing, break falling and kicking. We continued to learn advanced techniques before being split off into groups. Higher belts learnt advanced weapons techniques whilst the lower belts learnt advanced kicking and eventually long stick. Long stick, known as the Jang Bong in Korean is a six foot long stick, used with finesse and speed relying on the body and circular motion, similar to a dance the long stick can be split into hyungs or patterns. Historically, villagers used the long stick to defend against raiders and even in battles using various principles including circular motion against multiple attackers. These techniques are very special to Duk Moo Academy as they have been in Master Kim's family lineage for centuries and are considered extremely important due to their long lineage and lethality. Master Kim's father, Grandmaster Kim learnt these techniques which were originally spear, from his grandfather General Jul Chung Kim Kyung Sik, long stick was Grandmaster Kim's speciality and he greatly enjoyed this weapon. He advanced a great deal of its form that Duk Moo Academy teaches today, building patterns or hyungs that we teach as part of the current syllabus. Normally only taught at 4th Dan long stick is a rare weapon in Hapkido, however, it helps students relax and learn Hapkido principles, it relaxes students and has healing properties in particular to the arms, this is particularly useful for someone recovering from a broken arm or joint. Sword techniques were also taught to the higher belts, learning again finesse and grace under Master Kim's guidance. The sword techniques were taught from the bare basics to the very advanced including sword step sparring, however the principles are always considered more important and as such were taught first, including how to handle the sword, and the correct terminology.

Finally, the day came to an end, with many students learning a great deal of advanced techniques and feeling very generous towards Master Kim. After we cooled down and

finished, photos were taken including several group photos. The day finished with another meal and saying good bye to different members including the Belgian Master Patrick who is now seeking to join Duk Moo Academy.

All of the skills Master Kim taught at the seminar are considered very traditional which is important as currently France is very split on Korean Martial Arts. Unfortunately the latest Korean Hapkido instructor, Master Eun Jong Lee, the technical director of Hapkido in France, recently suffered from a ruptured aneurism and is half-paralysed preventing him teaching Hapkido to France, although him and Grandmaster Kim Duk-in who has now left France were very traditional and taught a great deal of Hapkido all over France, the situation has deteriorated and many people are claiming to be black belt Hapkido instructors with very limited and in some cases no experience. There is no traditional Korean Hapkido instructors left in France now, relying strongly on the Duk Moo Academy; many people come seeking Master Kim's expertise especially when he arrives in the country. After the seminar Master Kim had two important meetings while in Paris. He met with Julien Loesch, a high ranking official in the French Taekwondo Federation in which he discussed personal matters about Duk Moo Academy and Hapkido as well as another meeting with Master Byeon Kyeong-Suk and Master Guy Friess, both Taekwondo Masters uniting their academies into the Paris Taekwondo Academy, to help secure a future in Korean Martial Arts in France. These meetings were a great achievement, adding to the success of the seminar and Master Kim's trip to Paris.

Not only was the Parisian seminar a great success but Master Kim helped restore traditional ways to France and spread the teaching. With many outside of Duk Moo taking part and learning a great deal of advanced techniques and helping spread traditional Hapkido to France, it can be said this seminar was a great accomplishment and due to its success a seminar in Belgium has been arranged for the 15th September with Master Kim's attendance.

For more information about Duk Moo Hapkido or the Belgian seminar please contact us at matty_dundon@hotmail.co.uk or visit our website at www.dukmoo.com.